



SMALL YARD-WASTE COMPOSTING

Technical Guidance Document SW 97-01

Kansas law [K.S.A. 65-3402(y)] defines a composting facility as “any facility that composts wastes and has a composting area larger than one-half acre.” These facilities must be permitted through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment’s Bureau of Waste Management (BWM) as a solid waste processing facility.

Although not subject to permitting requirements, small yard-waste composting sites (operations with composting areas equal to or less than one-half acre) should consider implementing operational procedures which will reduce the possibility of odor and other nuisances. This guidance document suggests methods small yard-waste composting operations can use to avoid or correct common problems.

Run-on/run-off control for surface water protection.

1. Build a berm or similar barrier to prevent run-on to the site.
2. Build a berm or settling pond to collect run-off or provide a large grass buffer area to filter run-off.

Minimization of odors.

1. Turn the pile often enough to keep the compost aerobic.
2. Add enough dry matter to allow aeration.
3. Keep the pile small enough to be easily turned (less than 8 ft. wide, 5 ft. high, and a length that allows equipment to maneuver around the ends).
4. Locate the site a sufficient distance from the nearest residence to prevent a nuisance.

Illegal dumping control.

1. Educate the public on appropriate materials for composting.
2. Post operating hours and appropriate materials for composting.
3. Provide a dumpster for inappropriate material.
4. Provide fencing or other access control.

Minimization of composting time. (In general the compost should be ready to use in 6 to 24 months.)

1. Mix approximately equal parts of “green” and “brown” material.
2. Turn the pile as necessary to provide air.
3. Add water to keep the pile about as wet as a damp sponge.
4. Segregate active and finished compost.

For additional information regarding proper management of solid waste, you may contact the Bureau of Waste Management at (785)296-1600 or the address at the top of this document.